A

SERMON,

OCCASIONED BY THE

DEATH

OF

The Rev. OLIVER HART, A. M.

WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE, DEC. 31, 1795,
IN THE 73d YEAR OF HIS AGE.

PREACHED AT HOPEWELL, NEW-JERSEY,
April 24, 1796,

BY WILLIAM ROGERS, D. D.
Profeſſor of Engliſh and Belles Lettres in the Univerſity of Pennſylvania.

[PUBLISHED BY PARTICULAR REQUEST.]

BLESSED ARE THE DEAD WHO DIE IN THE LORD.—St. John.

" His walk ſo ſteady, and his hope ſo high,
" He neither bluſh'd to live, nor fear'd to die."
BAPTIST REGISTER.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

TO THE

AFFLICTED WIDOW, BEREAVED CHILDREN, AND MOURNING RELATIVES

OF THE

LATE Mr. HART;

LIKEWISE TO THE

BAPTIST CHURCHES IN GENERAL;

BUT MORE PARTICULARLY THOSE OF

SOUTHAMPTON, PHILADELPHIA, CHARLESTON, AND HOPEWELL;

THE FOLLOWING SERMON,

IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,

BY THEIR SYMPATHIZING FRIEND,

AND AFFECTIONATE SERVANT,

WILLIAM ROGERS.

Philadelphia, 28th April, 1796.

BRITISH MUSEUM

THE following discourse was delivered, *in substance*, at Southampton, Bucks-county, Pennsylvania, January 10, 1796,—the Lord's Day after the interment of the deceased.

It would have been delivered at Hopewell much sooner, had not an attention to a variety of other duties necessarily prevented.

The Church themselves fixed upon the first Lord's Day in April—an intervention of three weeks took place, which could not be avoided.

2 d Samuel, 3d chap. and part of the 38th verſe.

KNOW YE NOT THAT THERE IS—A GREAT MAN FALLEN—IN ISRAEL.

THESE words conſtitute a part of King David's lamentation over Abner, the ſon of Ner, who was, during Saul's life, the principal Captain of his hoſt!

Attached to Iſhboſheth, Saul's Son, Abner made him king over all Iſrael, and continued faithful to that houſe, until his honour received a wound in an imputation of guilt the moſt unfounded, from the very perſon to whoſe intereſt he was ſacrificing his time and ſuperior abilities!

From this moment Abner meditated an union with David:—The preliminaries being ſettled, he promiſed fair to be an important acquiſition in the ſcale of the houſe of Judah!—But alas—he was treacherouſly murdered by Joab, a chief officer in David's army, becauſe Abner, in the act of defending himſelf, had ſometime before killed Aſahel, Joab's brother!—

The whole narrative partakes ſo much of the tragically ſublime, that no apology is neceſſary in laying it before a chriſtian aſſembly in its own impreſſive dreſs.

Verſe 28. *And afterward when David heard it,* (i. e. of Abner's death and the circumſtances accompanying the ſame), he ſaid, *I and my kingdom are guiltleſs before the Lord forever from the blood of Abner, the ſon of Ner: Let it reſt on the head of Joab, and on all his father's houſe; and let there not fail from the houſe of Joab one that hath an iſſue, or that is a leper, or that leaneth on a ſtaff, or that falleth on the ſword, or that lacketh bread. So Joab and Abiſhai his brother ſlew Abner, becauſe he had ſlain their brother Aſahel at Gibeon in the battle. And David ſaid to Joab, and to all the people that* were *with him, Rend your clothes, and gird you with ſackcloth, and mourn before Abner. And king David* himſelf *followed the bier. And they buried Abner in Hebron: and the king lifted up his voice, and wept at the grave of Abner; and all the people wept. And the king lamented over Abner, and ſaid, Died Abner as a fool dieth? Thy hands* were *not bound, nor thy feet put into fetters: as a man falleth before wicked men,* ſo *felleſt thou. And all the people wept again over him. And when all the people came to cauſe David to eat meat, while it was yet day, David ſware, ſaying, So do God to me, and more alſo, if I taſte bread, or ought elſe, till the ſun be down. And all the people took notice* of it, *and it pleaſed them: as whatſoever the king did pleaſed all the people. For all the people, and all Iſrael, underſtood that day, that it was not of the king to ſlay Abner, the ſon of Ner. And the king ſaid unto his ſervants, Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Iſrael? And I* am *this day weak, though anointed king; and theſe men the ſons of Zeruiah* be *too hard for*

me : the Lord ſhall reward the doer of evil according to his wickedneſs.

Know ye not that there is—a great man fallen—in Iſrael ?

With what peculiar force, my brethren, doth this queſtion apply to the great and good man, whoſe death—we have on this day met together, for the purpoſe of improving in a ſpiritual manner—and to whoſe memory, we would attempt to render that tribute of reſpect, which is due to eminent worth and uſefulneſs in the church of Chriſt !—

The practice of thus honouring and praiſing the great, the deſerving, or the pious dead, is ſanctioned both by the old and new Teſtament.

In addition to the affecting inſtance already enlarged upon ; we find David in another place lamenting over Saul and Jonathan.—When he received intelligence of their deaths, *He took hold on his clothes and rent them ; and likewiſe all the men that were with him. And they mourned and wept, and faſted until even, for Saul and for Jonathan his ſon, and for the people of the Lord, and for the houſe of Iſrael ; becauſe they were fallen by the ſword.**—Verſe 17. *And David lamented with this lamentation over Saul and over Jonathan his ſon.*

* 2 Sam. i. 11, 12.

"The beauty of Iſrael is ſlain upon thy high places: how are the mighty fallen! Tell it not in Gath, publiſh it not in the ſtreets of Aſkelon; leſt the daughters of the Philiſtines rejoice, leſt the daughters of the uncircumciſed triumph. Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew, neither let there be rain upon you, nor fields of offerings: for there the ſhield of the mighty is vilely caſt away, the ſhield of Saul, as though he had not been anointed with oil. From the blood of the ſlain, from the fat of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan turned not back, and the ſword of Saul returned not empty. Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleaſant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided: they were ſwifter than eagles, they were ſtronger than lions. Ye daughters of Iſrael, weep over Saul, who clothed you in ſcarlet, with other delights; who put on ornaments of gold upon your apparel. How are the mighty fallen in the midſt of the battle! O Jonathan, thou waſt ſlain in thine high places. I am diſtreſſed for thee, my brother Jonathan; very pleaſant haſt thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, paſſing the love of women. How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war periſhed!"

When Elijah was taken up into heaven by a whirlwind, we are informed, that Eliſha ſaw it, and he cried, *My Father, my Father, the chariot of Iſrael, and the horſemen thereof. And he ſaw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces.**

* 2 Kings, ii. 12.

In the Acts of the Apoſtles we read, that *Devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him.**

Turn to the 11th chapter of the Epiſtle to the Hebrews, there you will find the Apoſtle of the Gentiles religiouſly engaged in this acceptable work; How admirably does he portray the character of the Elders, who obtained a good report!—Having mentioned Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Iſaac, Jacob, Joſeph, Moſes, and Rahab; he thus concludes:—

"What ſhall I more ſay? for the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Sampſon, and of Jephthæ; of David alſo, and Samuel, and of the Prophets: who through faith ſubdued kingdoms, wrought righteouſneſs, obtained promiſes, ſtopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, eſcaped the edge of the ſword, out of weakneſs were made ſtrong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raiſed to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better reſurrection: And others had trial of cruel mockings and ſcourgings, yea, moreover, of bonds and impriſonment: they were ſtoned, they were ſawn aſunder, were tempted, were ſlain with the ſword: they wandered about in ſheep-ſkins and goat-ſkins; being deſtitute, afflicted, tormented; (of whom the

* Chap. viii. verſe 2.

world was not worthy :) they wandered in deſerts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And theſe all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promiſe: God having provided ſome better thing for us, that they without us ſhould not be made perfect."

Many other examples might be produced, if it were neceſſary :—There is ONE, which muſt not be overlooked!—Jeſus himſelf, the lovely Saviour of men, wept over the grave of Lazarus, whom he ſtiles his FRIEND. This was an *eulogy* indeed!

KNOW YE NOT THAT THERE IS A GREAT MAN FALLEN IN ISRAEL?—In our ſpiritual Iſrael—in the church of Jeſus—in our particular connection!—Yes! we know it, we feel it!—In yon cemetery* he lies amid the cold clods of the valley!

"His God ſuſtain'd him in his final hour."

Though that tongue which once ſpoke ſo delightfully is now ſilent, and muſt remain ſo till the morn of the reſurrection; may Jehovah of his infinite mercy unlooſe mine on this mournful occaſion, while I attempt,

In the firſt place, to ſhew the peculiar application of the text to our deceaſed Friend and Brother.

Secondly, that a fall or death like his, though connected with *his* immediate gain, is to *us* an almoſt

* At Southampton.

irreparable loſs, and therefore a ſubject for lamentation.

In the firſt place I am to ſhew the peculiar application of my text to our deceaſed Friend and Brother.

Know ye not that there is a great man fallen in Iſrael?—He was a GREAT MAN in a variety of reſpects—As a Huſband, Father, Maſter, Companion and Citizen; above all, as a Chriſtian and a Miniſter of the everlaſting Goſpel!

"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publiſheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publiſheth ſalvation; that ſaith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth."*

As the ſermon will cloſe with a conciſe enumeration of ſome of the particulars appertaining to the life and character of the deceaſed—I mean now, by divine aſſiſtance, to point out more generally, in what reſpects a ſincere and faithful Miniſter of the Croſs of Chriſt, may be ſaid to be a *great man*.

The propriety of his being thus deſignated will appear, when we take into view the following things—

Firſt, That he is a ſervant of the beſt and the *greateſt* of beings.—Even of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit!—His employment may be ſtiled *divine*.—His

* Iſaiah lii. 7.

introduction into this ſacred office is from *above*; *For, no man*, who is ſincere and faithful, *taketh this honor unto himſelf, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.**

Some there are who deem it an honor to be the ſervants of kings, emperors, or any of their fellow-mortals, who move in what is denominated the higher circles of life; after all, they are only the ſervants of men, and frequently meet with the moſt painful diſappointments—but the Miniſter of the Sanctuary is pre-eminently diſtinguiſhed as being the *Servant of the moſt high God*, and his *reward* is *ſure*.—In confirmation of which we may quote the teſtimony of a wretched Cardinal, who is repreſented as ſaying,

> "Had I but ſerv'd my God with half the zeal
> I ſerv'd my king—he would not in mine age
> Have left me naked to mine enemies."†

Secondly, The objects of his ſtudy and care.—Theſe are *great—very great.*

Of his *Study*.—JEHOVAH, his attributes and perfections—Man's, creation, fall, and recovery—The manifeſtation of Jeſus in the fleſh, as reſulting from the everlaſting love of GOD. *For God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten ſon, that whoſoever believeth in him ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life.*‡—In ſhort, all the doctrines of the Bible, ſuch as ſalvation by free and ſovereign grace, juſtifi-

* Heb. v. 4. † Wolſey. ‡ John iii. 16.

cation by imputed righteouſneſs, repentance for and remiſſion of ſin, regeneration, ſanctification by the Holy Spirit, adoption into the family of God, the final perſeverance of the Saints, together with every other revealed truth and enjoined duty—Well might even a PAUL exclaim, *And who is ſufficient for theſe things?**

The objects of his *care* are great.—*The ſouls of men!* To have a care over what is great doth, in a certain degree, conſtitute greatneſs!

The ſouls of men may be ſo ſtiled, inaſmuch as (1.) Their faculties and capacities for happineſs are GREAT. The harmonious WATTS conveys this ſublime idea in the following beautiful lines:

"In vain on earth we hope to find
Some ſolid good to fill the mind:
We try new pleaſures, but we feel
The inward thirſt and torment ſtill."

There is nothing beneath the ſun which can poſſibly ſatisfy an immortal ſpirit—Such are its powers for ſuperior enjoyment, that it is forever on the wing; forever on the enquiry or ſearch after ſomething more ſubſtantial.

"Bliſs! ſublunary bliſs! proud words and vain!
Implicit treaſon to Divine Decree!
A bold invaſion of the rights of Heaven!
I claſp'd the phantoms and I found them air."†

* 2 Cor. ii. 16. † Dr. Young.

(2.) The ſouls of men were bought with a *great* price. *Foraſmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as ſilver and gold—but with the precious blood of Chriſt, as of a lamb without blemiſh and without ſpot.**

Redemption is always aſcribed to the blood of Jeſus as the procuring cauſe. This was freely ſhed in the room and ſtead of his ſheep! a price beyond all price! A ſum too large for the arithmetic of angels to compute!

The juſtly admired YOUNG in his Night the Fourth is full of this animating theme:

"Heaven wept, that men might ſmile! Heaven bled that Man Might never die!——

"Survey the wondrous cure:
And at each ſtep, let higher wonder riſe!
Pardon for infinite offence! and pardon
Through means that ſpeak it's value infinite!
A pardon bought with blood! with blood divine."

(3.) They are reſcued from *great*, even from endleſs miſery.

From the gnawing of the worm of conſcience which never dies, and the fierceneſs of the fire of JEHOVAH's wrath, which never can be quenched.—God is truly gracious unto the believing ſoul, and ſaith, *Deliver him from going down to the* PIT: *I have found a* RANSOM.†

* 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. † Job xxxiii. 24.

(4.) They are introduced into *great*, unſpeakable, and endleſs glory.

*Eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.**

The children of God derive their comfort not from terrene enjoyments, but eternal realities; theſe are the hills to which they lift their eyes, and from whence comes their aid—in this they rejoice, that *their names are written in heaven!*—Conſoling reflection—let whatever will take place on earth, a proſpect of future and unceaſing delight ſwallows up every other conſideration. The glory into which they are introduced admits of no decay, no concluſion! It tranſcends all expreſſion—all conception!

(5.) A *great* number, which no man can number are redeemed.—*After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations and kindreds and people and tongues, ſtood before the throne and before the lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; And cried with a loud voice, ſaying, Salvation to our God who ſitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.*†

The Chriſtian ſyſtem is a ſyſtem of *benevolence*; like its moſt gracious Author, it hath no pleaſure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn

* 1 Cor. ii. 9. † Rev. vii. 9, 10.

from his way and live—and adored be the God of our ſalvation; millions of millions *ſhall live*; in the moſt grateful acceptation of the word FOREVER!

Compared with the ſouls of men thus deſcribed and briefly ſpoken of; how little, how trifling, do worldly *cares* and *objects* appear!—We call Kings, Emperors, Governors, Stateſmen, Generals of Armies, renowned warriors, &c. GREAT MEN.—But, my Brethren, what are their objects and duties compared with the objects and duties of a Miniſter of the Goſpel?—Governments, treaties, ſyſtems of finance, penal laws, plans of education, and benevolent inſtitutions, however wiſely formed and beautifully arranged, muſt all have an end—But the ſouls of men, the blood of Jeſus, the perfections of Deity, the doctrines of Grace, and the joys of Heaven will continue *forever!*

With the utmoſt deference be it ſpoken, the faithful Miniſter of the Sanctuary, in one reſpect, reſembles his God!—For inſtance; worldly purſuits, whether they have reſpect to wealth, to honour, or to pleaſure,—compared with precious and never-dying ſouls,—he takes up in his mind, as JEHOVAH takes up the Iſles, viz.—*as a very little thing.*

One ſolid view of the ſoul will cauſe us to pronounce all ſublunary bliſs combined, to be no more than *a drop of the bucket*, and to count the whole *as the ſmall duſt of the balance.*

But as great and good as real Miniſters of the Goſpel are in the manner I have attempted to explain—they muſt nevertheleſs *die*. *Your Fathers where are they? and the Prophets do they live forever?**

This brings me to ſhow as was propoſed;

Secondly, That a fall or death like unto the one, the commemoration of which has more particularly brought us together this day, though connected with *his* immediate gain, is to *us* an almoſt irreparable loſs, and therefore a ſubject for lamentation.

Know ye not that there is a great Man fallen in Iſrael?—

Yes! replies my Soul afreſh.—We all know it!—and weep on account of it!—A great, a very great Man hath indeed *fallen* in our *American Iſrael.*

In our Aſſociation he has ſcarcely left his *equal*; in the United States, with diffidence be it ſpoken, viewing him in the *whole* of his character, he has not left his *ſuperior!*

Fallen from a ſtation of diſtinguiſhed eminence and great uſefulneſs in the church—*Fallen* from the boſoms of his affectionate Relatives, his loving and admiring friends, his fellow labourers in the vineyard, and the flock of Chriſt on earth, into the cold embraces of the grave. *To corruption*, he now emphatically ſaith,

* Zech. i. 5.

*Thou art my Father, and to the worm, Thou art my mother, and my ſiſter.**

For an event ſo mournful to us, can we forbid the *falling* tear?—no!

"Can I forget PHILANDER? That were ſtrange!
O my full heart——But ſhould I give it vent,
The beſt diſcourſe, tho' ſtudied well, would fail,
And *you* would liſten to my *ſinking* voice"

He *fell*, he died, on the laſt day of the laſt year at 5 o'clock in the evening. He commenced a new and endleſs one in the manſions of bliſs! In the ſeveral News-Papers of Philadelphia and elſewhere, the following juſt eulogium has ſince appeared.

"On Thurſday evening the 31ſt of December laſt, departed this life at Hopewell, Hunterdon county, New-Jerſey, the Rev. Mr. OLIVER HART, in the 73d year of his age.—Agreeably to his particular requeſt, his remains were conveyed to Southampton, Bucks county, Pennſylvania, where they were interred on the Lord's Day following, attended by weeping relatives, and a numerous concourſe of ſympathizing friends.

"This venerable Clergyman was Paſtor of the Baptiſt Church in Charleſton, South Carolina, for thirty years.—Owing to his warm and perſevering attachment to the cauſe of American liberty and independence, he was obliged in 1780 to quit that city; after

* Job xvii. 14.

which, he took the overſight of the Baptiſt Church in Hopewell, New-Jerſey, where he continued till his death!

" His character in the political and religious world is too well known to ſtand in need of deſcription.—The endowments of his mind; his early and unaffected piety; his abilities as a Theologian and Miniſter of the Sanctuary; the regularity of his whole life; his domeſtic virtues, and univerſal philanthropy, would afford ample foundation for a newſpaper eulogium.

" He bore a long and tedious confinement with exemplary patience, becoming reſignation, and to the laſt was ſtrong in faith, giving glory to GOD.

" Mark the perfect man and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace."

This account though ſufficiently long for a newſpaper, yet is by far too ſhort for a ſermon.

The preacher feels his inability even to ſketch the various and conſtantly increaſing excellencies of ſo great and good a man, during his pilgrimage on earth.—His deſire is however to give ſuch a narrative of the Deceaſed, as may to generations yet unborn, communicate ſome knowledge of ſuch a burning and ſhining Light!

The Rev. Mr. Hart was born in Warminſter Townſhip, Bucks County, Pennſylvania, on July the 5th 1723.

He made a public profeſſion of Religion at Southampton and was received as a member of the Church in that place in the 18th year of his age; having been previouſly baptized by the Rev. Mr. JENKIN JONES.

In 1746 he began to preach a crucified Jeſus and was ordained to the great work of the miniſtry Oct. 18th 1749, at Southampton likewiſe.—The ſame year he went to Charleſton, South Carolina, where he continued, as you have already heard, Paſtor of the Baptiſt Church in that city for 30 years: In the month of February, 1780, owing to his warm attachment to the American Revolution, it was thought adviſeable that he ſhould leave Charleſton, as the Britiſh troops were preparing to lay ſiege to it—hearing of its ſurrender, he journeyed towards his native ſoil, and in December following, in conſequence of the warmeſt ſolicitations, he took the overſight of this Church, from whence, in his paſtoral capacity, he removed not, till he was removed to glory.

Mr. Hart was twice married; his firſt wife was Miſs *Sarah Brees*, by whom he had eight children, all of whom are dead, excepting two, and theſe are members of the Church in Charleſton, now under the care of the Rev. Mr. RICHARD FURMAN.—His ſecond wife, the mourning widow who is preſent with us, paying this laſt public tribute of conjugal affection to the memory of a dear and beloved huſband, was Mrs. *Anne Grimball*, relict of Mr. Charles Grimball, of South Carolina, by whom he had two ſons; the firſt died young, the other is ſtill alive, and

bears the name of William Rogers Hart, given him as a teſtimony of that cordial affection which ſubſiſted between the deceaſed, and the perſon who is now addreſſing you.

Several Sermons and other compoſitions of Mr. HART's have appeared in print which do honour to his pen and his heart, viz. *Dancing Exploded; A Funeral Diſcourſe occaſioned by the death of the Rev. Mr. William Tennent;* The Chriſtian Temple; A Circular Letter on Chriſt's Mediatorial Character; America's Remembrancer;* and *A Goſpel Church portrayed.*---Beſides theſe, he has left in manuſcript many valuable diſcourſes on public and common occaſions, excluſive of other writings—A variety of his papers on different ſubjects, which he ſet great ſtore by as he often told me, together with a number of his beſt books, were deſtroyed by the Britiſh army when they over-ran the ſouthern ſtates.—He had a conſiderable turn for Poetry, though ſo modeſt, that but few of his moſt intimate friends knew he poſſeſſed this talent; a large book of Poems, principally of his own compoſition, was loſt in Charleſton:—as a ſpecimen of his poetic talent, the following verſes were handed me by his reſpected Widow, they were penned when his trials were exceedingly great.

" Foreboding thoughts and gloomy fears
Croud thick into my breaſt;
Perplexing doubts and anxious cares
Forbid my ſoul to reſt.

* From the ſame text as this ſermon—a circumſtance totally unknown to the author, till after its firſt delivery.

Happy ye Saints, above the ſkies,
Beyond the reach of woe!
Dear Lord, command my ſoul to riſe
With joyful haſte I'll go.
The world in ſackloth and diſtreſs,
I'd leave beneath my feet;
And mounting in a heavenly dreſs,
I would my Saviour meet."

As a CHRISTIAN *is the higheſt ſtile of man:* our departed brother was one in a pre-eminent degree, his whole life correſponded with his profeſſion of the name of JESUS.—Sound in the faith and an uniform advocate, both in public and in private, for the doctrines of free and ſovereign grace, he obtained and continued to deſerve the appellation, of an orthodox divine.—As a preacher his manner was pleaſing and his delivery animated; ſpeaking from the heart, it was his aim that the hearts of thoſe who heard him might always be benefited.—The ſum and ſubſtance of all his diſcourſes were founded on the great atonement, yet he ſtudied *variety*, for he never loſt ſight of the *Bible-ſyſtem* in any of its parts. *Rightly dividing the word of truth*, he was *a workman that needed not to be aſhamed.**

Shall I ſpeak of him in his civil capacity?—As a *Citizen* he was deſervedly eſteemed; the South Carolinians will never forget that once they could claim him as an inhabitant; they never mention his name but with reſpect.†—In thoſe times which tried men's

* 2 Tim. ii. 15.

† See an excellent Sermon by the Rev. Mr. Furman on Mr. Hart's deceaſe from Mat. xxv. 21. preached in Charleſton, February 7.

ſouls, his patriotiſm was well known, he diſdained the moſt diſtant ſubmiſſion to an invading, haughty foe, and was determined to ſtand or fall with his country. As a teſtimony of their confidence in his zeal and integrity; the COUNCIL OF SAFETY of South Carolina appointed Mr. HART, with the Hon. WILLIAM HENRY DRAYTON, and the Rev. Mr. WILLIAM TENNENT to viſit the frontiers of that ſtate, in order to reconcile, if poſſible, a number of the inhabitants who were diſaffected towards a revolutionary government—a piece of buſineſs, which, though attended with great bodily fatigue and perſonal danger, he executed with propriety and fidelity.

In every domeſtic relation, our deceaſed friend might be viewed as truly exemplary.

He was the loving and tender huſband—the kind and affectionate father—the mild and provident maſter---the attentive and obliging neighbour---the dutiful ſon---and the feeling brother!

I muſt not paſs over in ſilence his *liberal mindedneſs*. To a covetous and ſordidly parſimonious diſpoſition he was a ſtranger. An *avaricious* Chriſtian or *worldly* miniſter were in his ear, ſounds the moſt diſcordant. He read and believed his Bible, and conformably to its precepts, he was full of charity and good works! If not rich in earthly things, he was rich in faith. It was his meat and his drink to lay up treaſure in heaven, for there was his heart.

Cordially ſubſcribing to the inalienable rights of man as derived from the Author of our Being and the Father of our Spirits, he became an advocate for univerſal liberty. A mind like his was always open to conviction, and although in the year 1780, he laboured under ſome prejudices in favor of the ſlavery of the poor Africans and their deſcendants; his benevolent ſoul, ſoaring above every ſelfiſh motive, was ſoon brought to contemplate the whole with horror---and *to wiſh*, yea more, *fervently to pray* for ſucceſs to attend the endeavours of thoſe individuals or ſocieties who are laudably engaged in promoting the happineſs of the great human family!*

The praiſe due to ſuperior worth will, I truſt, in this caſe, ſtand in need of no apology, as the object on whom it is beſtowed, cannot be offended, by the tribute now offered to his real merit.

Our juſtly eſteemed Brother was bleſſed with ſuch ſtrong natural abilities, as to lay a foundation for thoſe grateful ſervices which from his youth to a good old age he rendered both to church and ſtate. His imagination was lively and his judgment firm! Although he never enjoyed the advantages reſulting from a

*Mr. Hart, by his will, has left a young negro man free, after a few years ſervice—who has ſince been diſpoſed of to a good maſter for five years.——Mrs. Hart, ſince the death of her huſband, has liberated a Negro Woman, with her youngeſt child, and diſpoſed of her other two children, each till the age of 25—when they are to be free alſo.

regular progreſs through any public ſchool or univerſity; yet ſuch were the improvements of his mind by ſelf-application, cloſe reading, and habitual reflection, that few men more richly deſerved thoſe honours, which, by our firſt ſeminaries of learning, have been in many inſtances too *incautiouſly* beſtowed! The college of Rhode-Island however was not WHOLLY inattentive to his worth; for in the year 1769, that inſtitution, it being at their *firſt* commencement, forwarded him a diploma, conſtituting him *Maſter of Arts!* But

> "Why all this toil for triumphs of an hour?
> What tho' we *wade in wealth*, or *ſoar* in *fame?*
> Earth's higheſt ſtation ends in 'Here he lies,'
> And 'duſt to duſt' concludes her nobleſt ſong."*

I ſaid a little while ago, that our valuable and beloved friend had *fallen* into the cold embraces of the grave.—Yes!—the grave for awhile appears flushed with victory.—It rejoices over it's prey! But it's conqueſt ſhall be of ſhort duration only.—He has fallen to *riſe*. He *will* riſe. He ſhall riſe crowned with glory! *He came to his grave in a full age,*† *like as a ſhock of corn cometh in his ſeaſon.*‡

* Dr. Young.

† Mr. Hart, when he died, was 72 years, 5 months, and 26 days old.——His brother, JOSEPH HART, Eſq. of Bucks-county, Pennſylvania, died Feb. 25, 1788—aged 72 years, 5 months and 24 days. His funeral Sermon was preached alſo by the *Author of this*, from 2 Cor. v. 1.——Their brother Mr. SILAS HART, of Virginia, died Oct. 29, 1795—aged 77 years, 5 months, and 24 days.

‡ Job v. 26.

Look forward! behold him aſcending, ſurrounded by his numerous converts and brethren from Southampton, Philadelphia, Charleſton, Hopewell, and many other places, to meet his Lord in the air!—Now is the grave deprived of it's captive!—*O death where is thy ſting? O grave where is thy victory?**—*I will ranſom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy deſtruction; repentance ſhall be hidden from mine eyes.*† Now will corruption put on incorruption; now will mortality put on immortality! Well may we on ſuch a theme as this exclaim with rapture—

"Oh the burſt gates! cruſh'd ſting! demoliſh'd throne!
Laſt gaſp of vanquiſh'd death. Shout earth and heaven!
This *ſum of good* to man."‡

Adored be JEHOVAH, we do not then ſorrow as thoſe do who are without hope, for if we believe that Jeſus died and roſe again, even ſo them alſo who ſleep in Jeſus will God bring with him.

I am, ſaith Chriſt, *the reſurrection and the life.* May we all be prepared to follow thoſe who, in being delivered from the body, are now employed, without any impediment whatever, in celebrating the praiſes of JEHOVAH JESUS!

A great man is fallen in Iſrael!—And this great man, my dear ſiſter, was thy *earthly* huſband. Feeble

* 1 Cor. xv. 55. † Hoſea xiii. 14. ‡ Dr. Young.

nature recoils, but religion whiſpers *all is well.* We ſympathize with you, for your loſs is great indeed.—They only can fully enter into your feelings, who have been made to drink of the ſame bitter cup; twice has it been thy lot! You have need of a double ſhare of divine grace to bear up your fainting ſpirit! Your earthly head, protector, counſellor, the patient partner of your cares, and your boſom friend is numbered with the dead—no more in this vale of tears will his preſence gladden your ſight! He is gone! "Gone," to uſe your own expreſſive language, "from great ſufferings, which he bore with the greateſt patience and reſignation, to receive an eternal crown."—In *him* much of your happineſs did center, and with *him* ſo much muſt ceaſe—*Ceaſe* did I ſay? Oh no! the condeſcending Jeſus will ſend another comforter—therefore, though you *mourn*, let me moſt affectionately beſeech you not to *murmur!*—Jeſus lives, and *becauſe I live*, ſaith he, *ye ſhall live alſo.* Your huſband, then is not *dead*, but *ſleepeth.*† *The* LORD *gave, and the Lord hath taken away;* may the reſponſe of your ſoul be, *bleſſed be the name of the* LORD!‡ *Thy maker is thine huſband; the* LORD *of hoſts is his name.*§ An huſband who hath loved thee with an everlaſting love, therefore with loving kindneſs hath he drawn thee.‖ To HIM therefore look up, he will never leave nor forſake thee; in his houſe are many manſions; a place is prepared for you; let not then your heart be troubled---For in a little while the ſovereign diſpoſer

† John xi. 11.
‡ Job i. 21.
§ Iſa. liv. 5.
‖ Jer. xxxi. 3.

of all events will alſo call you hence, you will go where your *late* and *former* neareſt earthly friends have gone, and never more feel the bitter pang of ſeparation:—With *them* and *all the redeemed of the Lord*, you will ere-long be employed forever in bowing down unto and adoring the GREAT TRIUNE.—The love of Emmanuel will then be the "delightful theme of your inceſſant meditation; the inexhauſtible ſource of your moſt exalted joys; and the ſubject of your ſublimeſt ſong."

A great man is fallen in Iſrael!—His bereaved children will alſo, as long as life endures, *feel* this to be a ſolemn truth—Oh what pleaſure does it afford my ſoul that both of them who are abſent have, ſince they arrived to the years of underſtanding, choſen JEHOVAH for their portion! This was to their departed pious parent a freſh and conſtant motive for unfeigned thankſgiving.—Let his quiet* exit, and

* For many months previous to his death he repeatedly ſaid that he viewed himſelf as *a dying man*.—A few days after he was taken with his laſt illneſs, and while he was able to walk about the room, he called for his Will, gave it to a friend, and deſired him to get his remains conveyed to Southampton, the *family burying place*.—It was with ſuch difficulty at this time that he drew his breath, and the agony he was in, was ſo great, that he ſaid, *he ſhould not think it ſtrange if he ſhould go into convulſions*—The ſtruggle for breath broke a veſſel, and he ſpat a quantity of blood—yet not a *ſingle murmur, or undue complaint!*—He would frequently lift up his hands and ſay, *poor mortal man!*—A friend once replied, *this mortal ſhall put on immortality*—he anſwered, *yes! yes!*—He would often ſay, *I want, I want!*—being aſked what he wanted?—*I*

full belief in the promiſes cauſe them to arreſt every improper complaint, and as profeſſors of our holy religion, may they *be ſtill*, knowing that GOD *hath done it*—thus will they improve this moſt afflicting ſtroke of an unerring Providence to *their* higheſt ſpiritual advantage, and the honor of HIM who woundeth and who healeth, who killeth and who maketh alive!——Why weeps my *nameſake?**—The cauſe is aſſuredly a ſufficient one.—His father has left our world and bidden us all *farewell*; He will no more hear his inſtructive voice, no more witneſs his fervent devotion, no more ſee his face—until they meet above the ſkies!—What though your *father* has forſaken you, your *mother* is with you ſtill, and ſhould ſhe alſo be called away, *The Lord will take you up.*† Con-

want the will of the Lord to be done!—The Rev. Mr. Van Horne called to ſee him; he aſked him if he felt comfortable, he replied, GOD *is an all ſufficient* SAVIOUR!

A perſon who at one time was ſitting by, and obſerving his great bodily diſtreſs, ſaid, *how happy for Mr. Hart that he has but one work to do!*—Dying was meant—He immediately replied, CHRIST *is the end of the law for* RIGHTEOUSNESS *to every one that* BELIEVETH!

Dec. 29. He called for all around him *to help him praiſe* GOD *for what he had done for his ſoul*—being told he would ſoon join the glorious company of ſaints and angels, he replied, *enough, enough!*

Dec. 30. His cough and ſpitting of blood increaſed, and every breath was accompanied with a groan!

When he died, he juſt put his head a little back, cloſed his eyes as if he were going into a ſleep, and EXPIRED!!!

* William Rogers Hart. Born Dec. 13, 1784. †Pſ. xxxvii. 10.

ſoling promiſe!—Oh that like young Joſiah, you may do that which is right in the ſight of the LORD, and walk in all the way of your father, and turn not aſide to the right hand or to the left!—Let me charge you to remember your Creator in the days of your youth, and to obey your mother in the LORD—ſhe is now your only earthly parent, and from her lonely ſituation puts in the juſteſt claim to your unreſerved attention and filial love!—You muſt die too, you may die ſoon, for daily experience ſolemnly witneſſeth that "From death's arreſt no age is free."

All the relatives of the deceaſed, without exception, ſuſtain by his death a heavy loſs! To tell them not to weep would contradict my ſubject.

"Their grief becomes them, and their tears are juſt."

But that *aſſurance* which we all poſſeſs, that his ſoul, his precious and immortal ſoul, has aſcended to his *Father and our Father*, to his *God and our God*, ſhould deaden every ſigh, and in the midſt of gloom impart a cheering influence!—

Our ſubject is admirably calculated to impreſs our minds with at leaſt one certain and moſt affecting truth, viz. That the greateſt and beſt of Miniſters or *Defenders of the Goſpel* muſt die as well as others. *It is appointed unto men once to die.* And Miniſters are but men. *There is no man hath power over the ſpirit to retain the ſpirit; neither hath he power in the day of death; and there is no diſcharge in this war.**

* Eccl. viii. 8.

Were we ever ſo deſirous of eluding the ſhafts of the mighty KING OF TERRORS, we ſhould find it impoſſible! The experience of all ages is confirmation ſtrong, as it reſpects this melancholy aſſertion.—"*Aaron*, as I had occaſion to obſerve in another funeral ſermon,* muſt aſcend Mount Hor and die there. *Moſes*, Mount Nebo, and die there. And the great Apoſtle of the Gentiles tells us, that the time of *his* departure was at hand." In modern times, what a catalogue of WORTHIES might be here introduced of various chriſtian ſocieties, who while on earth were truly *zealous for their* GOD, but now reſt in their graves—"Although they are DEAD, yet they ſpeak" moſt powerfully unto many who are yet alive. Far be it from me to open any bleeding wound afreſh; but as the Church of Chriſt, we of the Baptiſt denomination cannot forbear recollecting at a ſeaſon ſo ſolemn as the preſent, the venerable names of *Davis*, *Eaton*, *Stelle*, *Miller*, *Morgan*, *Kelſay*, and *Manning*, with many others; to which affecting liſt, we have now to add a HART!—If David lamented over Abner, Saul, and Jonathan, for their amiable virtues and heroiſm—If there were ſuch remarkable diſtreſs on account of good old Jacob's death as we read of in the 50th chapter of Geneſis—If all Judah and Jeruſalem mourned for Hezekiah and Joſiah†—ſurely we cannot, we ought not to refrain from the ſame expreſſions of grief when ſo many eminent and truly pious men have *fallen* in our Iſrael!

* On the death of the Rev. Mr. Edwards.

† 2 Chron. xxxii. 33. Alſo, ch. xxxv. 24, 25.

Oh that thoſe affections might be excited by every ſublunary change, as are beſt calculated to prepare us for the immutability of the ſkies!

The Britiſh Iſrael united with us in goſpel faith and apoſtolic ordinances have alſo been in the courſe of divine Providence peculiarly called upon within a few months paſt to *weep* and *mourn* "For the ſlain of the daughter of their people." With what effulgence do a *Gill*—*Gifford*—*Ryland*—and an *Evans*, with ſeveral others who might be mentioned, ſhine in the hiſtoric page, and ſhine they will in *this* as well as *that* hemiſphere till time ſhall be no more—and what is far better, as "champions for Chriſt and free grace they will forever ſhine in the annals of eternity." Connected with theſe, we are now ſummoned afreſh to deplore the late removals by death of a *Stennett*—a *Beddome*—and a *Clarke*!* My European correſpondents† have generally in their letters announced the melancholy tidings—Let us not in the day of our diſtreſs forget our diſtant Brethren, knowing that, *If one member ſuffer, all the members ſuffer with it! For by one Spirit are we* ALL BAPTIZED *into one body; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.*‡ *A great man is fallen in our Iſrael!* And

* Rev. William Clarke, A. M. of Exeter.

† "Death has lately made very rapid ſtrides among *diſſenting* Miniſters in this country. Many of our moſt aged, and learned, and uſeful divines, of different denominations have been, in the courſe of a few months, removed."——[Extract from the Rev. Mr. Dore's Letter.]

‡ 1 Cor. xii. 13.

both of you,* my Rev. Brethren, as well as myſelf, muſt follow him *through the valley of the ſhadow of death!*—Ought we not then to be more in earneſt as *Stewards of the myſteries of God*, more devoted to the ſervice of the Sanctuary, more ſpiritually minded, and more diſpoſed to *contend for the faith once delivered unto the Saints*, that we may be found *ready to go in with him to the marriage!*—When!—O hear it with fear and trembling, the *door will be ſhut* againſt every hypocrite, falſe profeſſor, and unbeliever!——God of his infinite mercy grant that we may not deceive our own ſouls—If we ſhould, our caſe will be ſhocking indeed! "Were ſuch, ſaith the evangelical Mr. Booth, the dreadful iſſue of our miniſterial courſe, we might, perhaps, among all the miſerable millions, be claſſed with the moſt wretched characters in hell." *But, beloved, we are perſuaded better things of you, and things that accompany ſalvation, though we thus ſpeak.*†—Jehovah hath in this providence ſpoken aloud to us; may we hear his voice and follow our departed Brother, Friend, and Father, even as he followed Chriſt—may we be ſtedfaſt, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, foraſmuch as we know that our labour ſhall not be in vain in the Lord!—Oh that we may *finiſh our courſe with joy*—and finally obtain the approbation of him, who is appointed to judge the quick and the dead! Even so, Lord Jesus!

* The Rev. Meſſrs. John Blackwell and James Ewing, who were preſent at the delivery of this diſcourſe.

† Heb. vi. 9.

Permit me alſo to addreſs you, who are members of this *afflicted* church ;—ſince my knowledge of you as a branch of our extenſive Zion, you have been *twice* bereaved of thoſe who broke unto you *the bread of life!*—The reſpected names of EATON, and of HART, will, I am fully ſenſible, be always held in precious remembrance among you—throughout theſe ſtates and among our European brethren they are and will be ſpoken of, as thoſe, who in their day and generation, were burning and ſhining lights indeed—they were PILLARS in the houſe of OUR GOD : By *their* deaths, and the deaths of *others* like them, we are, my beloved brethren, taught the inſtability of all created good—*Ceaſe ye then from man, whoſe breath is in his noſtrils : for wherein is he*, however great, good, and wiſe, *to be accounted of?**——Mr. EATON died in the meridian of life—

> " In him, with grace and eminence, did ſhine
> The Man, the Chriſtian, Scholar and Divine."†

Mr. Hart was continued among you, as has already been obſerved, to a good old age—the Lord of the Harveſt ſpared him, and made him a ſingular bleſſing for many years—

> " He ſat like the ſun, nor cloud poſſeſs'd."

On earth you will ſee him no more ; no more enjoy his agreeable converſation, or liſten to his gentle and

* Iſa. ii. 22.

† Lines on Mr. Eaton's tomb-ſtone.

ſalutary admonitions; no more join him in his peculiarly fervent petitions at a throne of Grace, or hear him preach thoſe doctrines, ordinances, and duties, which were the joy of his ſoul!—No more will you behold him, preſiding in your aſſemblies, or ſtepping forth as a healer of your breaches—You certainly will never forget his uniform prudential deportment, and his anxiety for the prevalence of unanimity among you! But he has *fallen*—he now ſleeps with his Fathers—he has eſcaped the grovelling intercourſe of worms, and joined the general aſſembly of the firſt-born on high! Try, my Brethren, to comfort one another—give thanks to GOD that you ever had ſuch a Paſtor:—Imitate the many things you ſaw in him ſo worthy of imitation, and "honor his memory by imbibing his ſpirit and copying his bright example."—Some are by reaſon of theſe viſitations too much diſpoſed to imagine that the LORD is about forſaking his church here below!—This cannot be! The great Head of the Church lives, the reſidue of the Spirit is with him, in him all fulneſs dwells, he is the ſame yeſterday, to-day, and forever! May the Lord of the harveſt ſend forth more faithful labourers into his harveſt---May a double portion of the ſpirit of our aſcended Elijahs, reſt upon our ſurviving Eliſhas! For verily, we have need to pray, *Help Lord: for the godly man ceaſeth: for the faithful fail from among the children of men.** In order that your preſent Paſtor† may prove as great a bleſſing as

* Pſalm xii. 1.

† Rev. Mr. JAMES EWING, elected March 10, 1796. Mr. Ewing was baptized by Mr. Hart, encouraged by him to preach,

thoſe who have gone before him, let me moſt affectionately entreat you to ſtrengthen his hands, to encourage his heart, to adminiſter to his neceſſities, and to pour out your ſouls in prayer to God for him; *endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace!*

May all thoſe who belong to this congregation and have for ſo many years ſitten under the miniſtry of their lately deceaſed paſtor, be enabled during this ſolemn interview and through the remainder of their days to recollect how ardently and frequently he plead with JEHOVAH for them—Call to mind, my hearers, for " Heaven and Earth have recorded it againſt you, that Mr. HART ſet before you, life and death, bleſſing and curſing"—*therefore chooſe life.*—Unintereſted in the Lamb that was ſlain, ſtrangers to atoning blood—and dying in your ſins, where Jeſus and his faithful ſervants are, you cannot go—where then will you go, but to a place of torment?—*Oh that you were wiſe, that you underſtood this, that you would conſider your latter end?*—There may be many among you, who may yet come forward as the precious fruits of his *pious* miniſtry—who ſhall be crowns of his rejoicing *in the preſence of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt at his coming!*

The labours of an EATON and of a HART with you are now over—but be aſſured that the moſt of

and finally ordained or ſet apart by him, aſſiſted by the Rev. Mr. Blackwell, to the ſacred work of the Miniſtry.

you have concerns with them which cannot be ſettled till you and they meet before the awful tribunal of the Judge eternal!—Gracious GOD! ſhould both or either of them appear as a *ſwift witneſs* againſt you—where will you hide your guilty heads?—All appall'd before the LION OF THE TRIBE OF JUDAH, you will acknowledge that you brought upon yourſelves *ſwift deſtruction!*—You will have to anſwer for every ſermon you ever heard them preach, for all the ſolemn warnings given you, and for all their preſſing and tender exhortations that you might *flee from the wrath to come!*

It is a ſerious thing to exchange worlds—

"Men may live fools, but fools they cannot die."

The Almighty has ſpared *you*, while thouſands and tens of thouſands have gone the way of all fleſh—your bounds are alſo appointed, they *cannot* be paſſed!—are you prepared, or not, to yield obedience to the KING OF TERRORS? This is an important queſtion, and merits an immediate ſolution, for

"DEATH'S SHAFTS fly thick: Here falls the village-ſwain,
And there his pamper'd lord. The cup goes round;
And who ſo artful as to put it by?
Tis long ſince DEATH had the majority;
Yet ſtrange! THE LIVING LAY IT NOT TO HEART."*

Finally, May all the redeemed of Chriſt Jeſus ſuitably reflect on theſe afflictive diſpenſations of divine

* Rev. Mr. Blair.

Providence!—One after another of our faithful WATCHMEN are removed out of their places, while we are left behind!---Oh that their departure from terreſtrial ſcenes, may prove inſtrumental in bringing eternal things nearer to *our* view---cauſing us to ſhake off all ſlothfulneſs, and to run the race that is ſet before us ---that we may be duly qualified through rich, free, and ſovereign grace to enter into thoſe abodes, where *there ſhall in no wiſe be introduced any thing that defileth, neither whatſoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they*, and THEY ONLY, *who are written in the Lamb's book of life.** O bleſſed ſtate! Where there is fulneſs of joy and pleaſures forevermore!---Joys and pleaſures which are ſpiritual, holy, and heavenly---which are pure, without mixture---full, without want---conſtant, without diminution or interruption---and perpetual, without end!---For

> " Could you, ſo rich in rapture, fear an *end*,
> That ghaſtly thought would drink up all your joy,
> And quite unparadiſe the realms of light."

My brethren, the illuſtrious hour is haſtening on, and will ſoon arrive, when all the *purchaſed poſſeſſion* will ſhine as the brightneſs of the firmament, and as the ſtars forever and ever---and then, ſhould we be ſo divinely favored as to *die in the Lord*, we ſhall meet our beloved HART, with all the ſaints of GOD! And, what is infinitely more deſirable, we ſhall meet our beloved JESUS, and join that happy train, whom taking by the hand, he will preſent to his and our

* Rev. xxi. 27.

Father, ſaying, " Behold me, and the children whom thou haſt given me." Then ſhall we behold the face of our GOD and SAVIOUR in righteouſneſs, and " be changed into his image from glory to glory, *aſcribing* with unutterable delight and joy, bleſſing and honor, thankſgiving and praiſe, unto him that ſitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb that was ſlain, forever and ever."——

" Believe, and ſhow the *reaſon* of a man;
Believe, and taſte the pleaſure of a GOD;
Believe, and *look with triumph on the tomb.**

Now to the THREE who bear record in Heaven, the FATHER, the WORD, and the HOLY GHOST; the ONE GOD; who only hath Immortality and dwelleth in that light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath ſeen or can ſee; be aſcribed *Glory*, and *Majeſty*, *Dominion*, and *Power*, both now and ever. Amen.

* Dr. Young.

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